A

TESTIMONY

Wherein is Shewed

Certain Weighty REASONS

Why the National Miniſters, their Way and Practice is Conſcientiouſly diſowned, and their Maintenance by *Tythes* or other Hire Denyed.

ALSO,

A Teſtimony, from a certain Experience, to the People called *Presbyterians*, and all that are zealous in their way.

ALSO,

A Teſtimony to them called *Anabaptiſts*; with ſome Reflections upon a Book (propagated among them) called, *The Child's Inſtructor*, wherein the Author hath vented many Detractions and Slanders againſt the *Light within*, and the People that bear Teſtimony of it.

Which herein are plainly anſwer'd, and the true Light and Way of Life, in which the Antient *Chriſtians* walked, and of which they teſtified, and which is now the ſame, is faithfully Vindicated.

By a Sufferer in Bonds for the Teſtimony of Truth againſt Deceit, and the Antichriſtian Oppreſſion of Tythes, and other forced Maintenance for the Miniſtry, Impoſition of Oaths, &c. **Sebaſtian Ellythorp.**

London, Printed, and Sold by *T. Sowle* at the *Crooked-Billet*, in *Holywell-Lane*, in *Shoreditch*, 1692.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A Teſtimony, wherein is ſhewed certain weighty Reaſons why the National Miniſters, their Way and Practice is Conſcientiouſly diſown'd, &c.

Kind Friends and Neighbours;

FOraſmuch as I am ſenſible that ſome of you may have thoughts in your minds, what may be the cauſe wherefore I chuſe rather to expoſe my ſelf and Family to great Loſſes and Inconveniency, then conform to the National way of Worſhip, but more eſpecially now when there is ſome Indulgence as to the point of Conformity; yet I come under the like Sufferings, rather than pay what hath been long accuſtomed to the National Miniſtry, or Teachers; and whether I may have a ſufficient Reaſon for my ſo doing; for as to what my Adverſary the Prieſt, or ſome raſh people have caſt upon me, as Wilfulneſs, and Stubbornneſs, or Covetouſneſs for ſaving my Money, &c. I hope that you all who have known my Converſation for ſome Years, may have obſerved that I have not ſhewed my ſelf a wilful, ſtubborn or contentious perſon in other matters; and as for ſaving my Money by with-holding what my Adverſary demands, I doubt not but that you are ſenſible that I have ſuffered, and am yet liable to ſuffer on this account, much more then the *payment* of all theſe things would be; which conſider'd, there is ground to conclude that my former and preſent Sufferings for this cauſe are either very fooliſh, or truly Conſcientious.

Therefore for the ſatisfaction of my Neighbours, and all moderate and ſober people where this may come, I do declare, that I had my Education according to the ſtricteſt ſort of the National Worſhip, as it was in that time; and in my young years it pleaſed God to ſtir me up, with the moſt diligent Enquirers, to ſeek after the knowledge of him, and Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and by the ſpace of ten Years I beſtowed no ſmall labour in travelling, hearing, writing, &c.

to gain what knowledge was poſſible for me to attain unto, by diligent following ſuch as were accounted the moſt eminent Teachers in thoſe dayes, and many times with earneſt deſire, and much zeal towards God, and a great treaſure of mens Opinions I then gathered into Notion and Writing; But all that did not miniſter ſatisfaction and comfort to my Soul, for there was a ſecret Witneſs in my Conſcience which did teſtifie, that the ground of ſeparation from God (*viz.* Sin and Tranſgreſſion) did yet ſtand in dominion in me, and in the ſence of this I paſſed many a ſorrowful hour in ſecret.

Then when the higheſt Notioniſts in all Profeſſions fail'd, the Lord God in his tender Mercy having viſited the Souls of ſome, in revealing his Son Chriſt Jeſus, the Light of the World, whom he hath given and appointed (as was declared by his Servants of old) a Witneſs to the People, and a Leader and Commander to all that receive, and truly follow him, the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey him; theſe he ſent forth in the Power of his Spirit, to preach him and Reconciliation to God, and Salvation in him to as many as ſhould hear his Voice, turn at his Reproof, and in true ſelf-denyal become followers of him in the day of their Viſitation, in the receiving of which Teſtimony, through God's mercy, I came to ſee the Myſteries of his Kingdom opened, and my mind being turned inward, the true Shepherd's Voice I came to hear, and his leading forth of the ways of Death and Deſtruction, into the way of Life and Peace; and this Chriſt Jeſus that Prophet, whom God hath appointed that all ſhould hear, the ſame that was born Teſtimony of by the Prophet, Apoſtles, and true Chriſtians in the Primitive times, whom God hath ſent to bleſs his People, *in turning every one of them from their Iniquities*, Acts 3. 22, 26. And then I came clearly to ſee that all who had taken upon them in mans will, and for worldly Honour and Gain, to be Expounders of Scripture, and Teachers and Inſtructers of people concerning the things of God, were all blind Guides, falſe Teachers, and Miniſters of Satan, and in the ſame ground which the falſe Prophets of old, of whom the Lord ſaid, *They ran and he never ſent them, and therefore they did not profit the People at all, being indeed ſuch as feed themſelves, but let the Flock be ſcattered*; read *Jer.* 23. *Ezek.* 13. & Chap. 34. And the Apoſtle *Peter*, in 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. plainly foretold, that as there was falſe Prophets among the People in former dayes, ſo there ſhould be falſe Teachers among *profeſſing Chriſtians*; and in the third Verſe he deſcribes them, that

through

through Covetousness with feigned Words they should make Merchandize of People, &c. And now that this is an evident mark of the Priests of this Generation, all whose understandings God hath opened, may clearly see, and I do surely believe (that according to Scripture-Testimony) Christ Jesus is the same, yesterday, to day, and forever; and the Way, Truth and Worship of God hath never changed since the Apostles dayes, though unstable deceitful men have been continually changing, as worldly advantages have appeared, that hath always drawn them.

And now its very evident that the National Ministers and Teachers whom great multitudes follow (for they being of the world, the world heareth them, 1 *John* 4. 5.) they clearly differ from the true Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel in the Primitive times (as appears by Scripture-Testimony) in many particulars.

As, 1*st*, They differ in their Call and Ordination; for the true Ministers and Teachers in the Apostles days, they were fitted and called to that Work and Service by the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 13. 2, 4. And where mention is made of some being chosen by the Church, and laying on of hands, *&c.* the Scripture plainly testifies, that *such were to be of Honest Report, Blameless men, and full of the Holy Ghost*, Acts 6. 3. 1 Tim. 3. And we cannot find in Scripture, that in the true Church they did at any time chuse men for their being learned in *Heathenish* Books and Languages, or that any proud, covetous, drunken, vicious, prophane men were ever chosen or appointed (by them) to that Work: But it is well known that in this Generation men put their Children to Universities as to get a Trade, with respect to Preferment, ease, & Worldly Gain thereby; and when they have gotten their degrees of Natural Learning, then they are set up by People to be Teachers, be they never so vicious, ungodly and prophane, such as God never appointed to that Work in any Age or Generation.

2*dly*, They differ in their Practice; the true Ministers in the Primitive times they spake and preached as the Spirit gave them utterance, and that which they had seen, heard & handled of the Word of Life, that they declared; they Prayed and Sung with the Spirit, and with Understanding; they sought not peoples worldly Estates to themselves, but to bring People to God; we read not any where in Scripture that they had their Prayers set down in a Book for all seasons and occasions; nor that they preached by Books; nor that they sung (and gave People to sing) *David's* Words turn'd into Rhimes;

Rhimes; nor that they ſprinkled Infants, and called it the Sacrament of Baptiſm; nor that they gave people Bread and Wine, and called it the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Chriſt; nor that they Married people for Money, nor Buried people for Money, nor that they Excommunicated people for not conforming to ſuch things. Much might be written, wherein they differ in Practice from the Antient *Chriſtians*, as recorded in the Scriptures, but this in brief.

3*dly*, They differ in their Maintenance; Chriſt ſent forth his Miniſters with this Command, *Freely have ye received, freely give, or miniſter*: And all their Allowance we read of, was into whatſoever Houſe they entred and were received, there to eat ſuch things as were ſet before them: And we can find no Scripture-Record that ever any of Chriſt's Miniſters either received or demanded *Tythes*, or any other ſettled or forced Maintenance, or that they ſued or impriſoned any for with-holding from them part of the increaſe of their Labours, Grounds, or Cattel, or Money for Offerings, Smoke, Plough, Geeſe, Hens, or Bees, *&c.* But *Paul*, who was a true Miniſter of Chriſt, and travelled, preached, and laboured much more then any of theſe; he wrought with his Hands, rather then he would be chargeable to any; and what he did receive for ſupply of his Neceſſities, in his great Travels and Sufferings, in Priſons, *&c.* it was the free Gift of ſuch as were converted to God by their Miniſtry, and not deſired by him upon his own account, but theirs, *Phil.* 4. 17. And,

4*thly*, They differ in Doctorine: we read in Scripture that Chriſt's Miniſters being ſent of him, they went forth and preached that men ſhould Repent, and that they ſhould bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, *Mark* 6. 12. *Acts* 26. 20. and that *Chriſtians* ſhould not let Sin reign in their mortal Bodies, nor obey it in the Luſt thereof, neither yield their Members as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin, but of Righteouſneſs to God, *Rom.* 6. 12, 13. But the Teachers of this Generation, who profeſs to be the Miniſters of Chriſt and the Goſpel; though they ſometimes talk of Repentance, ſorrow for Sin, Contrition, *&c.* yet they ſay, *That men cannot but commit Sin while they live, and it will prevail in their Members daily, while they are on this ſide the Grave.*

And the moſt Barbarous and Atheiſtical people upon Earth cannot commit Sin here no longer then they live, for in the Grave none can either commit Sin, nor repent from Sin: And Chriſt Jeſus

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teſtifieth, that *They who dye in their Sins, where he is they cannot come*, John 8. 21. Again,

The true Miniſters *were ſent to turn People from Darkneſs to Light, and from Satan's Power to God*, Acts 26. 18. But theſe turn People from one Tradition and Formal Obſervation to another, which they change and alter as opportunities appear for their advantage in this World. Again,

The true Miniſters preached among the *Gentiles, The Son of God revealed in them*, and this Myſtery, *Chriſt in them the Hope of Glory, warning and teaching every man*, that *they might preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. 1. 16. Coll. 1. 27, 28.

But the Money-ſeeking-Miniſters, oppoſe this Doctrine, and many of them make a mock at Chriſt within, and Light within, and at Gods Work being perfected in any while they live upon Earth; and they teach People to hear them talk of Mans notions of things without them, whereby their Hearts are not at all bettered as to their own inward ſtates and conditions. Again, The true Miniſters Preach'd, that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the Sons or Children of God, *Rom.* 8. 14.

But the other teach People, that as many as have Water ſprinkled on their Faces by them, (which they call *Baptiſm*) are thereby made Children of God, Members of Chriſt and Inheriters of the Kingdom of Heaven, witneſs their *Catechiſm*. And tho the Scripture plainly teſtify, *that the Unrighteous ſhall not Inherit the Kingdom of God, or of Heaven*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5, 21. And the Apoſtle cautions People *that they be not deceived, for neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate*, (Wanton or Unclean Perſons) *nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners ſhall Inherit the Kingdom of God*. And its very evident that ſome (if not many) that are ſo Sprinkled by the Prieſts when they are Children, and alſo Catechized and Taught by them afterward, and yet are doers of ſuch things as are there mentioned, to exclude out of Gods Kingdom. Again, Chriſt Jeſus, the faithful and true Witneſs, ſaid, *The Hour is coming, in which all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth, they that have done good to the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil to the Reſurrection of Damnation*, 1 Joh. 5, 28. 29.

But the Pariſh-Prieſts, when any perſon is Buried, for whom they can get Fees, they ſay, *We commit the Body of this our dear Brother to the Ground, in ſure and certain hope of Reſurrection to Eternal Life*:

And

And this they ſay without any enquiry, or conſideration, whether they have done good or evil; and very many People being wholly given up to believe whatever they ſay, are thereby ſetled in a groundleſs ſecurity, and vain hope, not ſearching the Scriptures, nor conſidering that every one muſt receive a righteous Recompence of Reward from the Hand of the juſt God, according to their Works, and that there is no reſpect of perſons with him. So now it is very evident to every one who ſhall in the Fear of God, ſingly obſerves the Teſtimony of Scripture, concerning the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and true Miniſters therein recorded, and compare the ſame with the Doctrine of the Miniſters and Preachers of this Generation, who Preach for Tythes, and great ſums of Money, and ſo live in Pride and Voluptuouſneſs, who have a long time ſtriven to force their Doctrine and Way of Worſhip upon all People, however with Cruelty and Violence to exact unjuſt and unreaſonable payment for it, even from them that cannot receive it, hereby it will plainly appear that their Work runs even paralel with the falſe Prophets of old, and theirs of whom the Lord ſaid, *They ſtrengthen the Hands of the Wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him Life*, Ezek. 13.22.

Theſe are but a few things of many that are clearly ſeen and opened by the Spirit of the Lord, which is the ſame now in all that wait to be led and inſtructed by it, as in former Generations, and is freely given of God even to the ſimple among Men, who in true fear wait to receive its Teſtimony, which is againſt Sin and Iniquity and all Deceit in every Heart, and againſt every evil way and work; and the reproof thereof being received and ſelf-denied, and the evil turned from, and Sin forſaken, then the ſame Spirit that Convinces of Sin, and Condemns all Unrighteouſneſs, as the mind comes to be turned to it and exerciſed in it, by it the underſtanding is truely opened, and the way of Life and Peace, and Salvation in Chriſt Jeſus revealed; and therein watching and abiding in him, and not to return to folly, nor to any enticing Vanity, or allurment in this World, nor to deny him before Men, tho' called to ſuffer for the Teſtimony of him, and of his Name and Truth, and ſpiritual Worſhip, which hath been the lot of his faithful Witneſſes, and true Followers throughout Ages and Generations: And this obſerve, if we read the Scriptures through, and the moſt credible Hiſtories extant, from *Cain* and *Able* to this day, we may find that it hath never been any long time together wherein the true

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Innocent Servants of God have not been exerciſed in Afflictions, and ſuffering Perſecution, and many times by the means of ſuch as made the higheſt Profeſſion and ſhew of Religion, as the Prieſts and falſe Prophets, who were in greateſt favour with Kings and Rulers, raiſed the moſt Perſecution, as againſt *Micaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and *Amos*, by whoſe means they were threatned, impriſoned, &c. under the falſe charges of Evil ſpeaking, Conſpiring, falſe Prophecy, and ſeeking peoples hurt: Who but the *Scribes*, *Phariſees*, *Chief Prieſts* and *Counſellors*, perſecuted to death the Son of God, impriſoned the Apoſtles, ſtoned *Stephen*, and raiſed Perſecution againſt *Paul* and others, and among ſuch as have had the Name of *Chriſtians*, *Biſhops*, *Doctors*, *Prieſts*, and high Learned men, have been the chief Agents in *burning*, *torturing*, *impriſoning*, and ſpoiling the Lord's tender people in *England*, and elſewhere, both formerly and of late Years.

So now in true Sobriety, in the Fear of God ſeriouſly conſider, (theſe things being made manifeſt, and clearly opened to my underſtanding by the Spirit of the Lord, and I being ſurely perſwaded of the truth thereof.) Whether now I have not ſufficient ground to ſeparate from theſe Teachers, and all their invented Formalities, and to prize the Lord's Mercy in diſcovering their Deceits, and alſo to with-hold all aſſiſtance from them in that work of deceiving others, of whoſe deſtruction I ſhould not be clear if (knowingly) I ſhould maintain, aſſiſt, or ſtrengthen the Hands of the great Deceivers, Servants and Inſtruments in that pernicious work.

And now dear People, all who may be herein concerned, who have hitherto been Followers of theſe Men, to your ſerious and ſober Conſideration theſe few particulars following are propoſed, *Viz.*

Firſt, Whether ye do not believe that the Eternal State of your Souls, that is everlaſting Bleſſedneſs or Miſery, is a matter of concern to every one, more weighty then any thing in this World?

Secondly, Whether ye do not believe that the everlaſting Salvation or Damnation of every man and woman's Soul doth depend on their laying hold of, and cloſing with the Mercy of God in the

Lord Jesus Christ, and their believing on him, and faithful following and abiding in him, or their sleighting, rejecting, and turning away from him, in the day of their Visitation?

Thirdly, Whether the day of every ones Visitation, wherein it may be possible for them to work out their Salvation, and to make their Calling and Election sure, can extend any further then the time of this short and uncertain Life?

Fourthly, Whether ye would be content to trust the Evidences and assurance of your whole Estates in this World, in the hands of any Stranger that should offer to procure and keep them for you, for a certain sum of Money, and you, your Families and Posterity to depend and rely only upon his Words for all? or would you not think it necessary for you surely to know, receive, and have the keeping of them your selves?

Fifthly, Whether now in this the Day of your Visitation, every one of you have not absolute need to wait on God, that he may open your understandings, and give you to know the mystery of Salvation in Christ Jesus, every one for your selves; and that you may every one Pray for your selves, and feel access to God in the Spirit for your selves, and know true Repentance and Faith given you of God, and wrought by his Spirit and Power in your selves, and to know a growth in Grace in your selves, and every one to be inwardly exercised by God's Spirit in your selves, to feel and truly to know these things, and no longer to rely and wholly to depend on a vain, proud, or covetous man, or any Hireling and self-ended man, to know for you, understand for you, pray for you, search the Scriptures for you, and believe for you, while ye live at ease in Ignorance, and count that most weighty matter, the eternal state of your immortal Souls to be of so little value, as wholly to trust him with it, and to take all on his Word till Death come; and then if it prove so, that these men be indeed Deceivers, for geting Money and worldly Gain, then your loss will be unrecoverable, and there can be no remedy for you?

And now *my Friends* and *Country People*, and whom it may concern, where-ever this may come, To him that knows the secrets of all

all hearts I do appeal, that I have no end to my ſelf in giving forth this Teſtimony, neither is it in Wrath and Revenge againſt that deceitful man, by whoſe Cruelty and continued Malice I have long ſuffered, and do ſuffer, nor againſt the Perſons of any of that ſort; for I am very ſenſible that after a little time we muſt all come to Judgment, and every one receive of the Juſt and Righteous God a full Reward according to our Works; and I being in the will of God brought into this exerciſe, which I could not with a clear Conſcience avoid, and finding Peace and Acceptance with God therein, it came into my heart to give forth this plain and true Teſtimony, to paſs among my Neighbours and others, as way ſhall be made, that all ſuch may be informed concerning the weighty Reaſons of my ſubmitting to this Suffering, and enduring this Affliction, *viz.* To be ſeparated from my Wife and Children, Kindred and Acquaintance, and from my earthly Habitation and Eſtate, and now in my Old Age to be ſhut up amongſt hainous Tranſgreſſors, poor and deſtitute (and which is worſe) wicked and prophane Perſons; and all this without any neceſſity or cauſe, but to keep my Conſcience void of offence to God, who hath certainly called me (and many more) to come out of *Babylon*, the falſe Spirit, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth, in whoſe Skirts is found the Blood of the Saints and Martyrs of Jeſus, by whoſe Sorceries all Nations have been deceived; read *Rev.* 17. and 18. Chap. *John* ſaw in the Spirit that ſuch a Myſtery of Iniquity, Whore, Falſe Spirit, Falſe Church, ſhould come up, *By which Kindreds, Nations, Peoples and Tongues ſhould be betwitched with her Sorceries, and made drunk with the Wine of her Fornication*: And now it is very clear, that all the invented Forms and Ways of Worſhip that have been ſet up and agreed by mens Devices, and forced upon People ſince the Apoſtles dayes, hath all been in another Spirit then they were led by, and walked in, and for other ends then they ſought after, who were the true Miniſters & Servants of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. And now my Soul is witneſs, (with many others) that now the Everlaſting Goſpel is Preached to them that dwell on the Earth, and to every People and Tongue, wherein the Call is, *to Fear God, and to Worſhip him*, Rev. 14.6,7. And now the falſe Teachers and Merchants of *Babylon*, that have been made rich by her Sorceries, and have made Merchandize of Bodies and Souls of men, *Rev.* 18. 13. they are the great Oppoſers, and by Contention, Slanders, and all their cunning Craftineſs en-

deavour to pervert the minds of People, and to keep them ſtill in Ignorance of the Work of God's Spirit & Power in themſelves, that ſo they may yet make a prey of them, and when they can no longer therewith prevail, they have raiſed all the Perſecution they have been able, and yet do to the utmoſt of their power; and this hath been a ſure mark of Deceivers and falſe Worſhippers throughout all Generations from *Cain* to this day, Cruelty, Force and Violence; But the true Worſhippers, Servants and Miniſters of God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, were never found in that work, as the Scripture very fully declares, 1 *Gal.* 4. 29. 2 *Cor.* 8, 9.

And now if any think or ſay, *It ſeems ſtrange that now when I am grown Old, and God hath given me Wife and Children, a conſiderable Habitation and Eſtate in the world, why now I cannot be ſatisfied to conform to the National Practice, and Laws, at leaſt to pay the Prieſt, or cauſe, or ſuffer it to be done, (though I like not their doings, nor approve their practice) which many worldly Wiſe men do, and chuſe to do to enjoy their Liberty and Eſtates, and avoid Sufferings?*

Well Friends, ſearch the Scriptures, and ye may find that Gods faithful Servants have been like-minded in former dayes, *Shadrach, Meſhach* and *Abednego* were prefered in the Province of *Babylon*, and were eſteemed Wiſe men, yet they refuſed to do as other Wiſe men did; for its ſaid, That the Judges, Counſellors, and all the Principal Men of the Kingdom ſubmitted to the King's decree; yet they boldly refuſed, though the Penalty was to be caſt into the Burning Fiery Furnace. And *Daniel*, a man greatly preferred to a ſtate of living honourably in the World, and though Princes and People obeyed that Decree of King *Darius*, yet *Daniel* rather ſubmitted to be caſt into the Lyons Den, then to diſpence with the exerciſe of his Conſcience towards God: And the Apoſtle *Paul* in his day and time was of the ſame mind, that what he was perſwaded in his own Heart he ought to do in obedience to God, his neareſt Friends could not diſwade him from, though he fore-ſaw great Sufferings ſhould attend him therein, *Acts* 21. 13. So now it is with me, and others like-minded, but as it hath been with the Lord's faithful Servants in former dayes.

And now my beloved Country-men, and all who are ſober minded, in whom there is any tender Deſires towards God, The cauſe of my preſent Writing, is my earneſt deſire for you that ye may no longer be beguiled by ſelf-ended, and deceitful men in this moſt weighty matter relating to the eternal ſtate of your Souls; But that you may all retire inward, and encline your Ear to him, whom God hath given for a Witneſs to the People, who ſheweth unto man his Way, and declares to him the Thoughts of his Heart, who convinces the World of Sn, turns from Iniquity, and leads into all Truth; even Chriſt Jeſus, in whom alone is Salvation, who is the Author of it to all that obey him, yea, he is to be obeyed who calls out of Sin, and from every ſinful way and work; for while men live in Sin, and continue Workers of Iniquity, the Seperation from God remains, and all Pretences of Religion, and Worſhip is in vain, as is fully declared in Scripture, *Iſa.* 1. 11. *&c. John* 9.31. *Mat.* 7. 22, 23, And Chriſt Jeſus in his Spiritual Manifeſtation, to all that receive and truely follow him, is the ſame in theſe dayes, as in former Generations, And that ye may all come truely to know him, and his ſaving work in every one of your Souls, now in this the day of your Viſitation, and that none of you may miſs, or come ſhort of it, is the real and Hearty deſire of your Friend, and truely Well-Wiſher,

From the Place of my Confinement in York *Caſtle, the* 3d Day *of the* 5th Month, 1691.

Sebaſtian Ellythorp.

To them called *Presbyterians*.

NOw ye my beloved Friends, Neighbours and Country-People, in whom there hath been raised some desires towards God and the knowledge of his Way, whereby you have been stirred up to seek further then the common sort who sit down at ease, contenting themselves with any dark shew of Worship which Men in their wills set up, and their Teachers for profit and wordly advantage observe and practice, and your Eyes being a little opened to see their deadness, coldness, formality, and earthly-mindedness, a secret convincement hath been raised in your understandings, that this is not the ancient Path, and Way in which the Apostles and true Christians walked in the Primitive times, nor in which the Zealous People of God (who suffered for their Testimony) walked in after Generations; and upon these considerations, some stirrings have risen in you to seek and enquire further, and then you not understanding the weight of that Heavenly Testimony of our Lord Jesus, *Luk.* 17.20,21,23,24. *You not knowing that the Kingdom of God comes not with observation, as lo here, and lo there, but is within you:* Men have called unto you, saying, *See here*, and *See there* and you (contrary to the Counsel, and command of our Lord Jesus) have gone after them, and great multitudes have been drawn (most especially in a time of outward Liberty) into that called the *Presbyterian* way, and their Teachers have appeared to them in a more refined sort of Prayers and preaching then the other, (*viz.* the common sort) and with some higher Notions, and more shew of Zeal, and they cuningly gloss their own Tenents, and Practices, and reproach, and bitterly inveigh against others, and some of you travel far, and are become eager followers of them, and peradventure now hope you are right, and that you have found the way, and need seek no further.

Well Friends, where you now are, I was, many years ago: I have trodden the same path, I diligently sought and enquird among them, and have large experience of what is there to be found, I have seen and tasted both their Root and Fruit, and well know it to be out of the same Ground, and of the same kind with the common sort,

ſort, onely a little more finely gloſſed in ſhew and appearance; and in this as well as the other form of Profeſ , people are brought no further then to rely upon men, and to depend on them for continual direction, in their Knowledge, Belief and Practice in all matters of Religion and Worſhip; and theſe Teachers whom you follow, differ not in the ground from theſe you have left, for their fitting for their Miniſtry, is by Schools and Colledges, where they alſo learn *Heatheniſh Books*, whereby to attain to the Knowledge of Languages, which is but natural; and the Scripture ſaith, *the natural man underſtands not the things that be of God, nor can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; and the motives that draws them to their Miniſtry, is that thereby they may be highly eſteemed among Men, and called *Maſters*, and get *Money*, and Worldly Riches; and I well know that when they were upermoſt in this Nation, they were as *Ambitious*, *Coveteous*, *Contentious* and *Cruel*, and ſought as much after the greateſt Livings, *Tythes*, and all other Forced Maintenance, and many of them as *bitter Perſecutors* as the Biſhops have been ſince; for in the dayes of Parliment and Protector, if any had but offered to Query of them or diſpute in their Aſſemblies (as *Paul's* manner was, *Acts* 17. 2.) then they had a *Popiſh Law*, which was made in Queen *Mary's* time, to defend their *Popiſh Prieſts*, and by it the *Preſbyterian Prieſts* cauſed Men or Women to be Impriſoned, and many have ſuffered much upon that account; and in that time I ſaw a Petition drawn up and ſigned by very many of that ſort of *Prieſts*, requeſting the Parliament, to eſtabliſh ſome Law for reſtraining *Anabaptiſts*, *Antinomians*, *Seekers*, and others who ſhrouded themſelves (as they ſaid) under Churches Independent, ſeperate Congregations, and Liberty of Conſcience, preſſing them much to ſuppreſs all others, and to eſtabliſh their form; and ſome of them ſought to draw other People to joyn with them therein, to ſtir up Perſecution: ſo whatever they ſmoothly pretend to, now that they have been a while under; when they had Worldly Power on their ſide, they were as Riged, for Publick Places, Forced Maintenance, and Cruel Perſecution upon all accounts, as ever any *Proteſtants* were; and their Brethren in *New-England* cauſed many of the Lords tender Servants to be cruelly Impriſoned, & Spoiled, ſome they Whipt, ſome they Branded with hot Irons, ſome they Cut of Ears, others they Baniſhed, and four they put to Death, and all for no other cauſe but the exerciſe of their Conſciences towards God, and

their

their faithful holding the Teſtimony they had received of him; and one of their chief Prieſts put forth a Book to excuſe their Murder and other Cruelties: And as to their Practice in their Worſhip, tho they ſeem a little more refin'd in their formal Obſervations then ſome others, as Praying without Book, expounding, ſprinkling Infants without Croſs or Sureties, Marrying without Ring, and leaving out ſome dark Formalities in Burying their Dead, and laying aſide the old Catechiſm, *&c.* Yet they do all theſe things for the ſame ends *viz.* For Money, and filthy Lucre; and as to their Doctrine, its in moſt things the ſame, as denying the Light of Chriſt, (or however the ſufficiency of it,) and the teaching of his Spirit, holding the ceaſing of Divine Revelation, neceſſity of Sining during Life, *&c.* Except they differ from ſome others, in holding *Election* and *Reprobation* of Perſons in Gods eternal Decree, which Doctrine if true, they and all others may ceaſe Preaching, Praying, and all other Religious Exerciſes, for not any thing that they, or any Men can do, can in any wiſe alter Gods Decree; But I have heard ſome argue thus, that as God hath decreed the end, ſo alſo he hath Decreed the means, tending thereto: So that whom he hath ordained to Salvation, he hath alſo ordained, that they ſhall be Baptized, read, hear them Preach, believe their Doctrine, receive their Sacrament diligently, obſerve Ordinances, come into and continue in Church-fellowſhip, *&c.* And with whom they (through their cunning craftineſs) thus prevail, they perſwade to continue trading with them, to buy their Merchandize, to receive and believe their Meanings of the Scriptures, and their Conſequences therefrom, and their Doctrines and Concluſions to take on their word, and all their days to continue learning of them, and giving them large Wages beſides. But to this I Anſwer, that by this Doctrine they would bring in abundance of unclean, and unſanctified *Chriſtians*, Believers, and Church-Members, as they call them, whom they have gathered, inſtructed, and led in the belief and practice of their Profeſſion and Way, who yet (with themſelves) remain Workers of Iniquity, ſuch as the pure holy and Righteous God never own'd, nor accepted, and ſuch as the Scriptures plainly declare, ſhall not be received, but ſhut out of Gods Kingdom, *Mat.* 7. 21. 23. *Luk.* 13. 27,28. *Rev.* 21. 8.

And this Doctrine of theirs, alſo excludes multitudes of People, to whom they have never travelled to preach that they call the Goſpel,

Gospel, nor their *Baptism*, *Sacraments* and *Ordinances*, who were never instructed in their Belief and Church-Fellowship, yet notwithstanding in Temperance, Chastity, Sobriety, Honesty, Humility, bearing and forgiving Injuries, and other *Christian* Vertues, which God ever owned and approved, far exceed many of the Professed *Christians*, and their Teachers too; for tho the Clergy-Men of all sorts (that I know) have pretended to derive their Commission from Christ's Words to his Disciples, *Go teach all Nations*, *Baptizing them*, &c. yet they usally travel no farther to Teach and Baptize, then the first great *Tythe-Parish*, or Rich Living that they can obtain, and there they mostly live at ease, in Pride and Fulness, and takes no care what becomes of other Nations; yet I do believe that God who is no respecter of persons, but in every Nation accepteth them that fear him, and work Righteousness, hath not altogether slighted the Nations far remote, (who are counted Heathens and Infidels, by the nominal Christians) nor left them utterly destitute of the means of Salvation, in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath given and appointed a Light to the Gentiles, and to be his Salvation to the Ends of the Earth, and that the great Heart-Searcher, may sometimes find more Faith, and good *Fruit*, in and among some of them, then among many great Professors of Christianity, as the Scripture declares of *Job*, *Elihu*, *Cornelius*, and the *Centurion* mentioned, *Mat.* 8. 10. and divers others in former Generations, who had not the Law and Ordinances in the Letter, as *Israel* had, and yet had received the knowledge of God, and his works in them, and shewed the work of the Law written in their Hearts; and God himself Testified of *Job*, that there was none like him in the Earth, a perfect and upright Man, that feared God and eschewed evil, and therein he was accepted of God, when many, that had the Law and Testimony and Ordinances in the Letter, and these advantages, yet taking Liberty to live in Sin, and Iniquity and Transgression of the Law, were therefore rejected as the Scriptures abundantly Testifie, and as to Gods fore-Knowledge of all things, that is a Secret, and Secret things belongs to God; but things that are revealed, to us and to our Children for ever, *Deut.* 29. 29. And he hath revealed that his Will is, that all Men should be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. And that the wicked should forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man

his Thoughts, and return to the Lord his God who is Gracious, and will abundantly Pardon, *Isa.* 55. 7. And that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, *Ezek.* 33. 11.

So now Dear People, my Testimony is, that tho you have the advantage of the Scriptures, which I do highly prize, and not at all undervalue, yet ye must every one come to the Light, or manifestation of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ in your own Hearts and Consciences, which shews and testifies against the secret workings of Satan in your Hearts, begetting evil Thoughts, Lusts, and inordinate Affections, which prevailing in you (with consent) brings forth all the evil words and actions, and ungodly practices that appears and abounds in the World, which defiles the Man, provokes the holy and just God to displeasure, and makes unfit for his Kingdom, which with the Light, or Spirit of Truth, being made manifest and reproved, must in obedience thereto be denyed, resisted, and turned from, and therein he must in the strait way of self-denial and the daily Cross, be truely and faithfully followed, or ye cannot be his Disciples, nor know Salvation by him; for they that profess to know God, but in works deny him, are the abominable, being Disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, *Titus* 1. 16. *But the Grace of God which brings Salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present World, looking for the Blessed Hope and Glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity,* (mark, all Iniquity) *and purifie unto himself a holy People, Zealous of good Works,* Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. So now the very same way of Life and Salvation, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, and not any other, is here truely and faithfully witnessed and held forth, as was in the Apostles dayes.

To the People called *Anabaptiſts*.

NOw it is in my Heart, in true Love and Good-Will, to write a few Words to you that are called *Anabaptiſts*; ye are come ſomething farther then the reſt, *viz.* from ſuch a reliance upon men, and eſpecially from ſuch a blind dependance upon the accounted learned men; and alſo out of the Practice of ſuch Formal Traditions, as have been by them invented, and brought in ſince the Apoſtles dayes, and ye are come to a more exact ſearch of the Scriptures, and to an outward imitation of ſuch Practices as are therein declared of; and ſo ye have rejected abundance of Formalities ſet up by men, and by Tradition and Compulſion enjoyn'd and obſerv'd amongſt the Nominal *Chriſtians*; and as I have been inform'd, many of your Predeceſſors have deeply ſuffered for their Teſtimony therein, *viz.* againſt Pariſh-Churches (ſo called) and the Worſhip there ſet up, *viz.* Infant Baptiſm, Swearing, *&c.* And I have heard ſome of the Chief Prieſts render you odious, as a People holding many horrid Opinions, as by them called, and particularly for ſetting up the Revelation of the Spirit, and denying Baptizing of Children, Singing of Pſalms, *&c.*

But now Friends conſider, that ſince ye have gotten more room in the World, and more Liberty therein, and ſometimes Worldly Power, many of you have declin'd that Teſtimony, ſometimes born by them that went before you under the ſame Name and Profeſſion, who then were low and humble, being deſpiſed and perſecuted among men, which they patiently indured; but ſince that day a Liberty hath been taken (at leaſt) by too many of you to Swear, pay Tythes, call and be called Maſters, yea, and ſometimes to mix with other Profeſſions in their formal Worſhip: and now I know none more then you for ſetting up the Letteral Knowledge of the Scriptures, whereby to underſtand Divine Myſteries, and the outward and formal Obſervation of ſuch things as were then practiſed, in meer imitation and tradition. And ſome of you with all your ſtrength oppoſe and reproach the Inward Manifeſtation of the Light and Spirit

of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of Mercy, who is no respecter of Persons, who would have all men to be saved, hath universally extended the same unto all, that all men through him might believe; for I have observed in a little Book, called or tituled, *The Child's Instructor*, set forth by one of your Profession (named *B. Keech*) and exposed in Print to publick view, wherein after a deal of Verses and flourishing Notions, the said Author undertakes to declare his Opinion and Judgment concerning the Light within; and saith, *Because there is a sort of People risen up of late dayes, that say there is a Light within them, and every one that cometh into the World, which if walked up to, will teach them all things necessary to Salvation*: *But*, saith he, *I shall shew that they do err exceedingly, not knowing, nor believing the Scriptures*, &c. I answer, That forasmuch as the Lord in mercy hath visited my Soul, in causing his Light to shine out of Darkness, which hath shined in my Heart, to give the Knowledge of him in the face of Jesus Christ. I acknowledge my self to be one of these people, whom this Author is pleased to charge with vile and pernicious Doctrine, Error, cursed Doctrine, *&c.* And for his affirming that *we know not, nor believe the Scriptures*: That is no less then a bold and impudent Lye; for we have all the means of knowing the Scriptures that he has, as natural men, and many of us have been diligent improvers of the same in our day, but more especially by the shinings in of the Light, or manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in our Hearts, we are confirmed in a certain belief of what is therein declared, and the Testimony that we have born of late dayes, concerning the Light, hath been the same, and no other' then the faithful Followers of him did formerly bear, as is fully and largely declared in the Scriptures of Truth, *viz.* That Christ the true Light lighteth every man that comes into the World; and that he that follows him shall not abide in Darkness, but have the Light of Life; and the same that gives Light to them that sit in Darkness, guides in the Way of Peace, *John* 1. 9. *John* 8. 12. *Luk.* 1. 79, &c.

Then this Author says, *he will shew what this Light is, and what it is not*; and he saith, *It is an excellent Spirit of Knowledge and Understanding, that God hath given, placed, and formed in man, which is called the Candle of the Lord, together with the Law, or substance of the first Covenant, written in the Hearts of the worst of men,*

which

which (he ſaith) *is much darkened in the Unregenerate by the Fall and Tranſgreſſion.* Then he ſaith, *This Light is not God, nor Chriſt the anointed of God, nor the Holy Spirit which flows from the Father and from Chriſt.* Yet he ſaith, *By this Light thou mayſt underſtand that there is a God, or an eternal inviſible Power which did create all things.* 2dly, *That he is the Soveraign Lord of the whole Creation, and doth preſerve all things which he hath made, and that every thing is at his diſpoſing.* 3dly, *It will teach thee that he ought to be Worſhipped as the higheſt Beeing, and no other beſides him.* 4thly, *It will Convince of Sin, and Reprove Wickedneſs, and ſhew Evil Thoughts.* 5thly, *It will teach Righteouſneſs towards men, and to exerciſe a juſt Mind and Spirit in all thy Ways and Doings.* 6thly, *It will teach Humility and Lolineſs to render due Reſpects to all.* 7thly, *It will teach to do to all men as thou wouldſt be done unto, and that in every thing.* Which he largely expreſſeth in Particulars, wherein tho' I do not tranſcribe his Words at large, yet I take the Subſtance without any intended detraction from its true Sence.

In Anſwer whereunto, I firſt obſerve, he holds that all things is, or may be done by ſomething in man, as himſelf, a Creature, and as fallen man too, for (he ſaith) This Light and Underſtanding is much darkened in the Unregenerate, by the Fall and Tranſgreſſion. So we muſt underſtand that he intends Man in his natural Underſtanding and Abilities, yea, by his own Spirit and underſtanding in that ſtate, without the ſhinings in of God, Chriſt, or the Holy Spirit which flows from the Father and from Chriſt, may know, underſtand, and be taught all theſe things. Surely this Author hath the moſt ſet up Man, as of himſelf, capable of Underſtanding, Knowledge, and attaining to Righteouſneſs without the enlightning, teaching, and powerful working of God, Chriſt, or the holy Spirit in him, that ever I read, or heard of any *Proteſtant* in all my days; the Scripture ſaith, *The World by Wiſdom knows not God*; and that men in their natural ſtate are Darkneſs, and underſtand not the things of God, nor can know them, becauſe they are Spiritually diſcerned, and that it is God that ſearcheth the Hearts, and declareth unto man his Thoughts, *&c.* Yet this Author affirms, that man in his fallen and unregenerate ſtate hath ſuch an excellent Spirit in him, by which (though it be much darkened by the fall, *&c.*) he may underſtand, be taught, convinced and inſtructed in all theſe

ſeven particulars (aforementioned.) Now let all the Wiſe in heart in the fear of God, judge how this man hath ſhewed his Knowledge or Belief of the Scriptures, or how the Scripture-Teſtimony concerning theſe things, and his Aſſertions can be reconciled.

Then he ſaith, *The Law given to* Iſrael *was a more glorious Miniſtration then this in all men.*

I Anſwer: That then thereby they ſhould have come to higher Attainments then the ſeven particulars, which he hath affirmed may be attained to by the Light within, as concerning the Knowledge of God, Righteouſneſs, Juſtice, *&c.* Yet one of the Prophets ſaid of them who had this Law, *That there was no Truth, Mercy nor Knowledge of God in the Land*, Hoſ. 4. 1. And much more of the like nature the Scriptures teſtifie concerning them. So it appears that notwithſtanding the more glorious Miniſtration to them, (as he calls it) yet they were much ſhort of theſe good Fruits and glorious Effects, which (as he confeſſeth) may be attained to by the Light within, where it is faithfully followed, obeyed, or lived up to: yet I fear that if a ſtrict ſearch be made among the great Profeſſors of *Chriſtianity* in this Age, and amongſt thoſe alſo of Profeſſion with this Author, they may be found much ſhort of the ſeven particulars by him mentioned, whereby it may appear that notwithſtanding all their high Notions, whereby he ſo low eſteemed the Light within, as darkened by the Fall, *&c.* yet they do not live up thereto, no more then *Iſrael* did: But *Simeon* the juſt and devout man, upon whom the holy Ghoſt was, he more highly eſteem'd the Light, whereby the *Gentiles* are lighted, then this Author, for he called it, *The Glory of* Iſrael, and that was no other then Chriſt, *Luk.* 2. 30, 31, 32.

But I obſerve, that when he hath thus far ſet up man in his attainments without God, Chriſt or the holy Spirit, then he raiſes a fearful Accuſation or Charge (and that moſt wicked and notoriouſly falſe) againſt us, for ſetting up an Inherent legal Righteouſneſs in man, denying the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt and price of his precious Blood, holding that Chriſt fulfilled the Law for us no other way but as our Pattern, and this he calls *a miſerable Evil, pernicious, Soul-deſtroying, curſed, and Popiſh Doctrine.*

I Anſwer; Surely never a wicked, crafty and deceitful Thief ſhewed more ſubtilty, in crying, *See there, turn Thief*, pointing at

at ſome Innocent Perſon, that himſelf might eſcape undiſcovered, then this deceitful man hath done; ſo that if Children and Young People, to whom he writes to abhor ſuch Doctrine, come to a good underſtanding therof, they may ſee that it is his Doctrine that is to be abhorred, and not ours, as he wickedly hath inſinuated; For we are ſo far from preaching, holding or believing any ſuch Doctrine, that we ſteadfaſtly believe and teſtifie, that notwithſtanding that excellent Spirit which God hath formed in man, by which the things of man be known, yet the things of God no man knows but by the Spirit of God; and tho the Spirit of man be called the Candle of the Lord, yet it is Chriſt the true Light that lights it, and for that end that no man ſhould put it under a Buſhel, or under a Bed, but on a Candleſtick, to ſhine forth in good Works, even in the ſight of men; and for want of this faithful ſhining, or walking in the Light, the Candle of the Wicked is often put out. And tho this Author affirms, that *men may be taught, and come to the knowledge of God, and of his Worſhip and righteous Ways*, as is in the ſeven Particulars by him afore-mentioned, is expreſſed, *by a Light that is not God, Chriſt, nor the holy Spirit*: Yet we believe (according to Scripture-Teſtimony) *that no man can know God the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him*, nor his Spiritual Worſhip, but by the *teaching of his Spirit*; and we believe that it is the holy Spirit that convinces the World of Sin, Righteouſneſs and Judgment, and that of every Sin, which holy Spirit the uncircumciſed in Heart and Ears reſiſt, as in former days, yet who do receive it, and walk in it; the ſame Spirit that convinces of Sin, leads and guides into all Truth, and is the Comforter, and brings out of Condemnation, who come to be baptized with it, and therein buried with Chriſt, being crucified with him to the putting off the old man, as to the former Converſation, and puts on Chriſt the new and heavenly man, and as he is received ſo to walk in him; and herein is the Righteouſneſs of the Law fulfilled in them that walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit; and this Righteouſneſs is not of man, nor wrought by the power or wiſdom of man, but only of Chriſt, the Power and Wiſdom of God, in them that truly believe, faithfully follow, and abide in him, and who come to be led by his Spirit, by which the things freely given us of God we truly know, and our receiving all of him: And this doth not detract from, nor make void the Righteouſneſs and Sufferings of Chriſt,

Christ, or shedding of his precious Blood, and giving his Life a Ransom, but which is the effect of the travail of his Soul, and that wherein the Father is glorified in all that hear his Voice, follow and abide in him, and bring forth the Fruits of his Spirit: And this Doctrine we have received, and do believe, and freely declare that all Men in their natural state, are gone out of the Way of Life; and Destruction and Misery are in their Wayes, and the Way of Peace (in that state) they cannot know; and that Christ Jesus the Light of the World, whom God the Father hath given a Light to lighten the *Gentiles*, and to be his Salvation to the ends of the Earth, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that none can come to the Father but by him, and he is that Prophet of whom *Moses* spake, that all should hear, even in the Ministration and Testimony of his holy Spirit, whom God hath sent to bless his People, in turning every one of them from their Iniquities. So what we hold and testifie concerning *God*, *Christ*, the *Light*, or *holy Spirit*, is the same Doctrine and no other then is fully and clearly held forth and testified of in the Scriptures; and if this Author cannot receive this Testimony, but will run into groundless Distinctions in the Imaginations of his carnal mind, being wise in his own Conceit, and thereby seek to pervert the right Wayes of the Lord, and subvert the Souls of the Simple, by slandering the Innocent, we shall leave him and his Work to the Judgment of the great Day, but finds no cause to decline our faithful Testimony herein.

But he is offended that any do affirm Christ to be within, saying, *He is not to be believed that saith he is in the secret Chamber, the Heart.*

I Answer: These words (the Heart) are by him added to Christ's Words, which bold attempt hath been accounted dangerous, *Prov.* 30. 6. *Rev.* 22. 18. And I do not find in all the Scriptures that any of the faithful Witnesses of Christ Jesus, have shut him out of the Heart; for how shall he search the Hearts if he be not there? And it is testified in *Rev.* 2. 23. *All the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the Reins and Hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your Works.* And by this mans Assertion *John*'s Testimony herein was not to be believed, nor is not; so no wonder that he slanders us, who dare contradict the plain Testimony of Scripture in so weighty a point, and indeed if he could exclude Christ out of peoples Hearts, the strong man Satan would reign there, and his Goods would be in peace. So here Children and

Young

Young People may ſee whoſe Seat and Kingdom this Author would have their Hearts to be, that would not have it believed that Chriſt is there.

Then in another place he undertakes to inform his Readers of the inſufficiency of the Light, *viz.* to ſhew (as he ſaith) what it cannot do, and ſaith, *It cannot reveal Goſpel-Myſteries, nor teach the Righteouſneſs of God.*

I Anſwer: We have ſufficient ground to believe, that this man never made proof or tryal herein, that he never was a follower of the Light, or holy Spirit of Truth in its leadings, and yet dare be ſo bold as to accuſe it of Inſufficiency: For Chriſt ſaith, *I am the Light of the World, he that follows me ſhall not abide in Darkneſs, but ſhall have the Light of Life*; and that's a Goſpel-Myſtery. And the Apoſtle *Paul* who had more underſtanding of Goſpel-Myſteries then this Author, witneſſed it to be the ſhinings in of the Light of God in their Hearts, that gave the Knowledge of his Glory in the Face of Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Cor.*4.6. And I do not find that ever any that received the Teſtimony of the true Light, and faithfully walked in it, did accuſe it of Inſufficiency: but the Murmurers and Complainers againſt the Light were ſuch as walked after their own ungodly Luſts. And for the Scriptures, which he calls *the more ſure Word of Prophecy, to reveal the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. I do affirm, that they who writ them, had the Goſpel-Myſteries and Truths therein declared, revealed to and in them, by the Light or holy Spirit of Truth (which is one) before they ſpake or writ thereof; ſo thereby it was firſt revealed in them, before it was by them declared to others; ſince which time, and to this day many Thouſand of prophane Perſons, and many worldly wiſe and learned men have had the Scriptures in the Letter, and ſome have been great Contenders about them, yet not receiving the ſame Spirit for their Guide, have been Strangers and Enemies to it, and to them that have walked in it, and were led by it, as this man hath largely manifeſted himſelf; and if one Party may be taken for Evidence againſt another, very many and groſs Errors do abound among the Nominal *Chriſtians*, who all have the Scriptures, and make a great noiſe of Profeſſion of them, and yet it is manifeſt by the Confuſion and Contention that is amongſt them; that as the Apoſtle ſaid of the *Jews*, *In reading* Moſes *Writings the Vail is over their Hearts:* which Vail was then taken away in turning to the Lord,

that Spirit which was and is a Goſpel-Miniſtry, and was and is revealed by the Spirit of the Lord, and not by the bare Letter of the Scriptures without it.

And where he ſaith, *That the Law given to* Iſrael, *was a more glorious Miniſtration then that in all men, which is that written in the Hearts*, which he grants *doth ſhew and teach the many good and weighty things aforementioned.*

I Anſwer: This appears to be abſolutely contrary to the Teſtimony of Scripture, let the ſober Reader ſeriouſly peruſe 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. to the end of the Chapter, and *Heb.* 8. 6. to the end: To which I refer.

And for his charging the People that bear witneſs to the Light within, or manifeſtation of the Spirit, and the teachings of it, with *denying the Imputed Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the Vertue of his precious Blood, holding that Chriſt hath fulfilled the Law for us no otherwiſe then as our Pattern, preaching Juſtification by the Works of the Law*, &c.

Theſe things I do declare to be abſolute Slanders; for theſe Doctrines were never held nor preached by us: but yet I never read in Scripture, that the Apoſtles and true Miniſters of Chriſt did Preach the *imputed Righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, nor any Notions concerning the ſame for Juſtification to them that choſe to live in Unrighteouſneſs, for with this Doctrine multitudes of prophane, ignorant, and licentious people in *Chriſtendom*, who have choſen to walk in the broad Way, have long flatter'd themſelves, and one another: But I find that the Apoſtles and Primitive *Chriſtians* were more ſerious, and looked for a nearer and more ſure ground of Faith and Hope of the Salvation of their Souls, then the bare Notions and Belief concerning what was long ſince done, ſuffered and fulfilled without them, ſo as to relie only thereupon for Juſtification; and conſidering the Teſtimony of our Lord Jeſus, *That not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven*: and that *many ſhall ſay in that day, Have we not Propheſied in thy Name*, &c. and yet ſhall be rejected, becauſe *workers of Iniquity*, Matth. 7. 21, 22, 23. And the Apoſtle *John* bears another ſort of Teſtimony, to the little Children that he writ to, concerning this point, then this Author hath done to Children in this Age; 1 *John* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Little Children, let no man deceive you, he that doth Righteouſneſs is Righteous*

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even as he is Righteous; *He that committeth Sin is of the Devil, and in this the Children of God are manifeſt, & the Children of the Devil: He that doth not Righteouſneſs is not of God*, &c. Which Teſtimony, and many more to the ſame purpoſe in the Scriptures, wherein is fully expreſſed the doing, working, and fulfilling of Righteouſneſs (through the operation of the Spirit and Power of God) in all true Believers and Followers of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are full as large and expreſs to the point as the Doctrine of theſe People who believe in the Light, as by them held and preached, (clear from the falſe Repreſentations, Perverſions and Slanders of their Adverſaries) which this Author hath exclaimed againſt with his *Popiſh*, *curſed*, *pernicious*, *Soul-deſtroying*, &c. on purpoſe to ſcare Children and Young People there-from, as if the very hearing of Righteouſneſs doing, working, or being fulfilled in them, by the working of the Spirit and Power of Chriſt in them, were the moſt dangerous Poyſon they could poſſibly touch.

And now if this Author be yet alive, I deſire that he, and all other Broachers and Propagators of ſuch Doctrine, (tending to the prejudicing and perverting the minds of Children and Young People in their tender Years, from receiving and cloſing with the Light of Chriſt, and working of his holy Spirit in them) may truly Repent of this their Wickedneſs, and retract this and all ſuch their Books and Writings, leaſt ſome thereby become hardned to their deſtruction, and their Blood be required at their Hands.

And in true Humility, in the Fear of God I do admoniſh all Parents and Governors of Children, to beware how they ſuffer their Children to be leaven'd with Prejudice againſt the Light of Chriſt (in which they ſhould believe, *that they may be Children of Light*, according to the Teſtimony of Jeſus, *John* 12.36. By teaching, or cauſing, or ſuffering them to be taught in ſuch corrupt Books, as this which this Author hath prepared (and hath been by him and others publiſhed with great applauſe) for their miſ-information, as is largely made manifeſt.

And now to him that ſurely underſtands the Secrets of all Hearts I am known, and to all that may ſee or hear this Teſtimony, I ingenuouſly declare, that I have no deſign upon you, nor any upon the Face of the Earth; nor have I ever ſought or received any worldly Gain or Advantage to my ſelf, by any Teſtimony I have at any time appeared in, (but on the contrary have largely ſuffered,

and do ſuffer upon that very account) nor have I propounded any ſuch thing to my ſelf hereby, for I have been grieved that this occaſion was given by this Author (a perſon whom I never knew) and in ſecret I much deſired ſome other might be ſtirred up to witneſs againſt it, till I felt it in my Spirit a Work and Teſtimony required of me, wherein I muſt clear my Conſcience in the ſight of God, to whom I muſt give account; and I have not ſtudied to find out Arguments whereby to run down the Simpleſt Man or Woman in the leaſt meaſure of Truth, neither do I hereby deſire, nor ſeek to acquire a Name or Eſteem among Men, nor ſtrive for Maſtery or Victory in Controverſie; for I am very ſenſible that my time is near to an end, and my day near expired, in which I find it my weighty concern to be found doing and ſuffering what the Lord calls me unto, by and through the aſſiſtance of his holy Spirit and Power, concerning which I muſt give an account to him, and receive Reward accordingly.

And now to all People I do declare, that I ſtedfaſtly believe that all Profeſſion of Religion, and outward Performances and Obſervations, received by Tradition or Imitation of others, Comprehended and Practiced in the carnal mind, doth not avail to Salvation, nor that the Imitation of *John's* Water-Baptiſm, tho a true Miniſtration in its time, by him that was truly called and ſent of God to fulfil that Miniſtry, wherein he bore Record and Teſtimony of a greater, who was to come after him, tho he was before him, *who ſhould Baptize with the holy Ghoſt and with Fire*, (mark) *and with his Fan thoroughly purge his Floor, and gather the Wheat into the Garner, and burn the Chaff with unquenchable Fire*, (mark, a great work) *Mat.* 3. 12. And this Baptizer, and Baptiſm the Apoſtles preached, and the Primitive *Chriſtians* witneſſed, in which they were buried with Chriſt, Baptized into Chriſt, and put on Chriſt, and were new Creatures: and this Dipping or Plunging in Water cannot do, and without which, outward things did not then, nor do now avail any thing.

And tho in that time they did ſomtimes Baptize with Water, as alſo ſome did Circumcize, Shave, Vow and condeſcended to ſuch like legal Obſervations, among them that were Zealous of the Law and Ordinances, once commanded to the *Jews*, that they might gain the *Jews* and thoſe that were under the Law, yet they plainly declared that none of theſe things availed, but *a new Creature*, and

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Faith which works by Love, and that Christ is all, and all one in him, Gal. 6. 15. Chap. 3. 27, 28. Col 3. 11. *And that the Baptism that now saves us, is not the puting away of the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience towards God, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. And this cannot be attained by an Imitation of that which was a true Ministration, before he was made manifest to *Israel*, whom *John* knew not, till he that sent him to Baptize with Water, said unto him, *That upon whom he should see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he that Baptizeth with the holy Ghost; and he saw and bare Record that this is the Son of God*, John 1. 31, 33, 34.

So now my desire is, that both Old and Young People, and Children, may cease from following the Deceivers of all sorts, who for Gain, and worldly Advantage, by their cunning Craftiness deceive the simple, in drawing their minds from the true Light of Christ Jesus, or the holy Spirit of Truth in their own Hearts, by calling it *delusion*, *insufficient*, &c. And the Testimony of it *evil*, *pernicious*, *cursed* and *Popish Doctrine*; for so were the Prophets of old, Christ and the Apostles treated, and most by them that made the highest pretences to the Law, Scriptures and Ordinances, and were Zealous Contenders in a false Spirit. But in all Generations, who were turned to the Light, or Measure of the Spirit of Christ in their own Hearts, and in sincerity of Heart receive the same, and came truely to walk and abide therein, none were ever deluded or misled by it, which leads out of Sin, and every sinful way, into Truth and Holiness, without which none can come to God: But all that ever have been drawn out from it, to follow self-ended and deceitful men (tho never so covered with Profession of Religion, and feigned words) have been thereby deceived, as by their Fruits is clearly manifest.

Written in York-Castle, *where I am detained Prisoner for Obeying the Command of Christ, who saith*, Swear not at all. The 1st Day of the 10th Month, 1691.

Postscript

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AND forasmuch as many in this Generation, (some through Envy, and others through Ignorance) have often reproached and slandered us, as if we were a People not believing the Scriptures, which is altogether false; It is in my Heart, (not as insulting over any, but in tenderness to all where this may come) to propound a few places of Scripture to your Serious Consideration, whether ye do indeed believe the Testimony thereof to be true.

One Place is that of *Mat.* 12. 34. *How can ye, being Evil, speak Good things; for out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh?*

Now consider this all ye that say, tho the publick Teachers be Proud, Covetous and unjust Men, and many of them Voluptuous and Vicious, and so manifest themselves to be evil, *yet* (say you) *They Teach well, and Speak good things.* Now this Imagination is absolutely contrary to this Scripture-Testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ: I own that the Scriptures being the words of the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles, are good Words, and a Testimony of good things, holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the good and holy Spirit, and for good ends, *viz.* to draw and perswade People to God; but when corrupt deceitful Men speaks the same words, with their Comments, Additions, Glosses, and Meanings, to draw People after them for filthy Lucre, these are not good things, nor doth the hearing them profit People at all.

Another Scripture is of *Mat.* 12. *ver.* 36. *I say unto you, that every Idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof at the Day of Judgment.*

Now consider this all ye Scoffers, Jesters, Romancers, wanton and debauched Talkers, do ye believe this Scripture to be true? then its high time for you to leave these Practices, least you add to your account till ye be not able to answer in the dreadful Day of God.

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Another Scripture is, 1 Theſſ. 4. 6. *That no Man go beyond or defraud his Brother in any matter, becauſe the Lord is the Avenger of all ſuch.*

Hear this now all ye who bend your Wit to cheat, defraud, circumvent, and go beyond them you deal withal, of which there is at this Day ſo great a cry againſt one another in matters both of Law and Trade; if ye believe this Scripture to be true, its time to ceaſe from theſe deceitful Practices, leſt by continuance therein ye heap up Vengeance againſt your own Souls, more then you ſhall be able to bear.

Another Scripture is in 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in the Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Now all People that read and hear the Scriptures, conſider Seriouſly if ye believe this Teſtimony, and live in the ſence of that belief, bad Words and Deeds would not ſo abound where *Chriſtianity* and Belief of the Scriptures is profeſſed in Words.

So now Dear People, my Souls travel is, that ye my Country-Men whom the Lord hath favoured with the knowledge and free uſe of the Scriptures of Truth, may truly recieve, believe and obey the holy Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in your own Hearts and Conſciences, by which the Scriptures were given forth, that thereby your underſtandings may be opened, to know the things that weightily concern the eternal Salvation of your own Souls, and that by it your Lives and Converſations may be ordered, to live and walk, and have your Conſciences exerciſed towards God and men at all times, and in all things, as a People ſo believing, being truly zealous of good Works, and ſo obtain the good Reward through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that truly believe, ſincerely obey, faithfully follow and abide in him.

S. E.

THE END.